

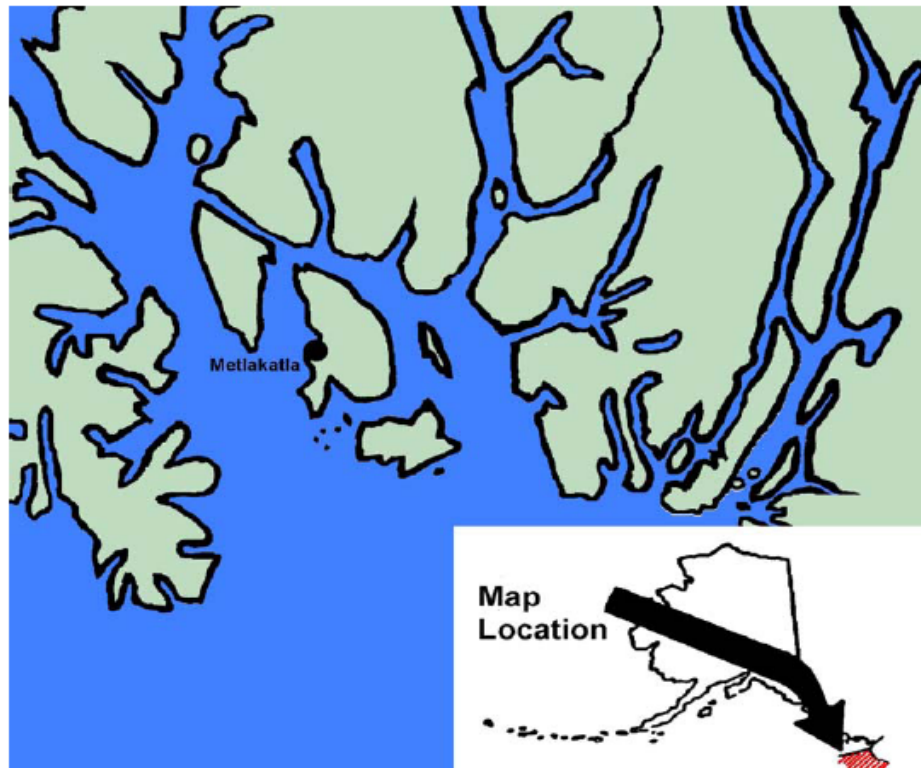
ANNETTE ISLAND, ALASKA

<http://www.ihs.gov/facilitieservices/areaoffices/alaska/dpehs/pdf/ak-profile/aisu.pdf>

Environmental

Factors. The Annette Island Indian Reservation lies in the southernmost portion of the Alexander Archipelago in Southeast Alaska. This 136 square mile reservation is about 680 air miles north of Seattle and 900 air miles south of Anchorage. The major island of the reservation is Annette Island, which measures 10 miles wide by 20 miles long. Like most islands in Southeast Alaska,

Annette has a rugged, mountainous topography. Swampy, muskeg soils and dense rain forests cover low-lying areas and large lakes occupy former glacial valleys.



A group of 800 Tsimpsian Indians formed the first permanent settlement on Annette Island in 1887. They migrated from British Columbia under the leadership of Father William Duncan. Denied both civil rights and religious freedom, these pioneers left their mission community near Prince Rupert, Canada. They traveled over 650 miles to find Metlakatla on the shores of Port Chester. Flanked by a gentle beach and granite mountains, the harbor provided an ideal environment for supporting a new, model community. The community developed rapidly, setting up streets, industries and public institutions.

A Congressional Act on March 3, 1891, first set apart the Annette Island Reservation for the use and occupancy of the "Metlakatla Indians and other Natives who might be permitted to join them."

In 1916, a Presidential proclamation enlarged the Reservation to include all the waters and inlets within 3,000 feet of the Annette Island shoreline. On August 23, 1944, the reservation's Constitution and By-laws went into effect. This vested governmental authority is a council elected by and from Native community members. Today, the Metlakatla Indian Community of Annette Island Reservation is the only Federal reservation in Alaska with full trust status.

Like the rest of Southeast Alaska, the reservation enjoys a maritime climate characterized by cool summers, mild winters and heavy year-around precipitation. Due to the extreme southerly location, most of this precipitation falls as rain with the greatest amount occurring during October and November. Gale winds (exceeding 32 m.p.h.) are frequent from October through March. Skies are overcast normally 70 percent of the time.